

AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) In an inventory management system having a database and a network connection interconnected interconnecting a product manufacturer and at least one component part supplier, a process comprising the steps of:

estimating a possible quantity of components parts supplied from the component part supplier based on spare part records of the component part supplier stored in the database;

writing the estimation into one of a plurality of documents wherein a quantity, a description, and a proportion of the component parts of a product required in a forthcoming period of time are listed in fields of the document; and

informing the component part supplier of the proportion of the component parts listed in the document through the network connection for confirmation; and

allowing the component part supplier to modify the estimated proportion of the component parts in the fields of the document directly, if the proportion is not achievable in the forthcoming period of time,

wherein the system determines whether the component part supplier has replied to the document by replying to a computer of the product manufacturer within a predetermined period of time after a computer system of the component part supplier has received the document, and wherein the system stores the document if it is determined that the component part supplier has replied to the document.

2-6. (Canceled)

Serial Number 09/974,885

7. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 6_1, wherein if ~~the determination is negative it is determined that the component part supplier has not replied to the document~~, the system takes the estimated quantity of the component parts supplied by the component part supplier in the forthcoming period of time and ~~store~~stores the same in the database.